

Message Text

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S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 REYKJAVIK 0211

STADIS

EXDIS

FOR EUR/NE

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MARR, IC, NATO

SUBJECT: IDF RETENTION NEGOTIATIONS: SOME PERSONAL THOUGHTS
A WEEK BEFORE RESUMPTION OF NEGOTIATIONS

1. SUMMARY: WE STILL HAVE A LONG WAY TO GO BEFORE WE ARE OUT OF THE WOODS, AND WE MAY BE FACED WITH ALL SORTS OF GOOD AND BAD SURPRISES BEFORE IT IS OVER. CURRENT ATMOSPHERE, HOWEVER, SHOWS INCREASING SENTIMENT FOR RETENTION OF AN UNIM-PAIRED ALBEIT MODIFIED IDF. EVENTS IN ICELAND PAST FEW WEEKS CONFIRM USG NEGOTIATING APPROACH, NAMELY FLEXIBILITY AND SUFFICIENT RESPONSIVENESS TO KEEP THE USG-GOI DIALOGUE GOING. FONMIN MAY MAKE PROPOSAL OUTLINED REYKJAVIK 0185 OR SOME EQUALLY UNACCEPTABLE PROPOSAL. IT IS IMPORTANT WE TAKE IT "UNDER ADVISEMENT" SO AS TO ASSURE A MARCH NEGOTIATING SESSION. THERE WILL ALSO HAVE TO BE USG OFFERS OF MORE MILITARY PERSONNEL REDUCTIONS, THE TIMING, HOWEVER, OF THESE AS WELL AS REDUCTIONS PREVIOUSLY OFFERED, CAN BE TIED IN WITH AVAILABILITY OF CIVILIAN REPLACEMENTS. EQUALLY IMPORTANT IS FOR FONMIN AGUSTSSON TO HAVE OPPORTUNITY CALL ON SECRETARY KISSINGER, EVEN IF ONLY BRIEFLY. NATO MAY EVENTUALLY HAVE TO COMMENT ON WHAT CONSTITUTES A MINIMUM MILITARY MANPOWER FORCE WHETHER OR NOT THIS IS CONSIDERED APPROPRIATE FOR NATO COMMENT, BUT NO ACTION SHOULD BE TAKEN ON THIS YET.

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"COMMITMENT TO NATO" (ALTHOUGH UNDEFINED) APPEARS TO BE THE LATEST DEVICE PRO-IDF MEMBERS OF THE GOVT HOPE WILL KEEP THE PROGRESSIVE PARTY AND THE GOVT INTACT SINCE COALITION GOVT PLATFORM OF 1971 CALLED FOR CONTINUED MEMBERSHIP IN NATO. END

SUMMARY.

2. FONMIN TOLD ME HE WAS GOING THROUGH A "STRUGGLE OF CONSCIENCE." HE FEELS IT IMPORTANT THAT SOME SORT OF IDF REMAIN BUT AS DEPUTY CHAIRMAN OF HIS PARTY HE FEELS HE CANNOT CONTRIBUTE TO PARTY'S SPLIT. HE AND PRIME MINISTER, THEREFORE, BELIEVE THAT BEST APPROACH IS TO PROLONG THE DIALOGUE WITH US. EACH HAS SEVERAL TIMES ASKED ME TO CONVEY TO WASHINGTON NOT TO TAKE A HARD STAND WHICH WOULD, IN TURN, FORCE GOI TO TAKE EQUALLY HARD STAND. IN TRYING TO FORMULATE A GOI POSITION, EVEN IF ONLY FOR "A BASIS OF DISCUSSION," THESE TWO OFFICIALS UNFORTUNATELY ARE TALKING THEMSELVES INTO BELIEVING THAT THE WORLD HAS REACHED A TOLERABLE LEVEL OF PEACE AND THAT DETENTE BETWEEN THE SUPER POWERS HAS BEEN ACHIEVED. THEY ARGUE, THEREFORE, THAT THE IDF IS LOSING ITS SIGNIFICANCE, BUT MILITARY AUTHORITIES WILL NOT ADMIT IT. THERE IS ALSO THE FEELING THAT SINCE SECRETARY KISSINGER HAS NOT DIRECTLY ADDRESSED HIMSELF TO THE IDF ISSUE, THE BASE CANNOT BE AS IMPORTANT AS WE ARE TRYING TO MAKE IT OUT TO BE. THEY ALSO SEEM TO WANT TO BELIEVE THAT ICELAND'S MEMBERSHIP IN NATO OBLIGES NATO TO PROTECT ICELAND WITH ONLY TOKEN INPUT FROM ICELAND. THE TIME HAS COME FOR US TO TRY AGAIN TO DISABUSE THE FONMIN OF THESE NOTIONS. IT IS IMPORTANT, THEREFORE, FOR THE SECRETARY TO MEET WITH HIM, NO MATTER HOW BRIEFLY, TO ASSURE HIM THAT THE IDF MUST NOT BE IMPAIRED. I WOULD ALSO SUGGEST A PRESS RELEASE BY THE SECRETARY AFTER THE MEETING STATING THE SECRETARY'S VIEWS. I WOULD ALSO SUGGEST A PAPER BE PREPARED AND HANDED TO THE FONMIN DURING THE COURSE OF THE NEGOTIATIONS WHICH WILL SPELL OUT MORE FULLY THE IMPORTANCE OF THE IDF AND HOW ITS RETENTION TODAY IN AN UNIMPAIRED STATE WILL ENABLE ICELAND TO PARTICIPATE IN WESTERN ENDEAVORS TO ACHIEVE DETENTE. THE PAPER SHOULD BE WRITTEN WITH THE REALIZATION THAT IT WILL BE SUBMITTED TO THE ALTHING FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE, AND THUS LEAKED BY SOME OF ITS MEMBERS TO THE PRESS AND THE PUBLIC. THESE TACTICS WILL HELP TO KEEP UP THE MOMENTUM OF THE PRO-IDF PETITION DRIVE CURRENTLY IN FULL FORCE (AND WHICH THE PETITION SUPPORTERS NOW CLAIM HAS APPROXIMATELY 26,000 SIGNATURES

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REPRESENTING 25 PERCENT OF THE COUNTRY'S ELIGIBLE VOTERS).

3. A SUBJECT THAT MAY WELL BE RAISED BY THE FONMIN DURING THE NEGOTIATIONS IS THE NEED FOR THE FIGHTER INTERCEPTOR SQUADRON (FIS). IT IS MY UNDERSTANDING THAT THE NAVY AND COMICEDEFOR FEEL ITS PRESENCE IS NECESSARY FOR MILITARY REASONS BUT THAT THE AIR FORCE IN WASHINGTON DISAGREES AND HAS BEEN WILLING TO MAINTAIN IT IN ICELAND ONLY BECAUSE STATE DEPARTMENT INSISTS FOR POLITICAL REASONS. WHATEVER THE PROS AND CONS ARE MILITARILY, THERE IS NO QUESTION IN MY MIND THE FIS PRESENCE IS NEEDED POLITICALLY (SEE REYKJAVIK 0205 FOR LATEST INDICATION OF THIS. ALSO PRO-IDF PETITION CALLS FOR CONTINUED NEED FOR ACTIVE DIRECT DEFENSE OF ICELAND. THE F-4S ARE THE VISIBLE

PROOF ICELAND IS BEING DEFENDED). I HAVE REASON TO BELIEVE THAT FONMIN MAY BE AWARE OF AIR FORCE'S FEELING. A FEW DAYS AGO, AGNAR KOFOED-HASEN, IN VERY ARROGANT MANNER, TOLD ME THAT HIS "CONTACTS" IN AIR FORCE AT DEFENSE DEPT "SOMETIME AGO" TOLD HIM THAT ONLY REASON FIS IS IN ICELAND IS BECAUSE GOI WANTED IT AND STATE DEPT INSISTED FOR POLITICAL REASONS. KOFOED-HANSEN WANTED ME TO KNOW THAT PRESENT GOVT DOES NOT WANT IT AND THAT HE PLANS TO ADVISE FONMIN THAT NO MILITARY JUSTIFICATION EXISTS FOR IT, THEREFORE A FURTHER CUT OF ABOUT 450 MILITARY PERSONNEL COULD BE ACHIEVED. (THE MOTIVES OF KOFOED-HANSEN WILL BE SUBJECT OF SEPTTEL.) FONMIN MIGHT PURSUE THIS WITH US FOR TWO REASONS: (A) TO ACHIEVE FURTHER MILITARY REDUCTIONS, AND (B) TO PULL GROUND OUT FROM UNDER OPPOSITION INDEPENDENCE PARTY AND PRO-IDF PETITION SUPPORTERS. NEEDLESS TO SAY, OUR STATED ARGUMENT FOR RETENTION OF FIS MUST BE FOR MILITARY REASONS. FONMIN MAY PROPOSE COMPROMISE AND SUGGEST FIS BE INCLUDED AS ROTATIONAL UNIT, BUT OUR POSITION HAS ALWAYS BEEN THAT BECAUSE NATURE OF ITS ACTIVITIES, IT MUST BE STATIONED IN ICELAND.

4. WORTHY OF STUDY WITHIN USG, HOWEVER, IS NEED FOR SO LARGE A MILITARY CADRE FOR 8 F-4S. THE FIS IS A SELF-CONTAINED UNIT. FOR ALL INTENT AND PURPOSES IT IS DIVORCED FROM COMICEDEFOR. IT HAS ITS OWN ADMIN SERVICE PERSONNEL, ITS OWN PARACHUTE PACKING SHOP, ITS OWN HYDRAULIC SHOP, ETC., WHICH DUPLICATE NAVY FACILITIES AT KEFLAVIK. ADMIRAL BELING (PREVIOUS COMICEDEFOR) ONCE TOLD ME THAT IF HE COULD UNIFY SUPPORT SERVICES HE COULD PROBABLY LOP OFF ABOUT 125-150 MILITARY MEN FROM FIS.

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ADMIRAL COOLEY HAS MORE OR LESS HINTED THE SAME TO ME.
IRVING

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S E C R E T SECTION 2 OF 2 REYKJAVIK 0211

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FOR EUR/NE

5. NEW U.S. PROPOSAL. I HAVE HEARD FROM SEVERAL SOURCES CLOSE TO PRIME MINISTER THAT LATTER WOULD APPRECIATE A U.S. INITIATIVE ON STRENGTHENING ICELANDIC COAST GUARD. THE LATEST TO PROPOSE THIS TO ME ARE HANS ANDERSEN AND TOMAS ARNASON (THE LATER A PROGRESSIVE PARTY CONFIDANT OF PRIME MINISTER). THEY ALL SEEM TO HAVE IN MIND AN INDEPENDENT INSHORE PATROL SURVEILLANCE CAPABILITY FOR THE ICELANDIC COAST GUARD AS WELL AS SOME CONTINUING LIAISON ARRANGEMENTS WITH THE IDF. ALTHOUGH GOI WOULD UNDOUBTEDLY WELCOME JOINT OPERATION OF A P-3 AS PROPOSED BY DEP SECDEF CLEMENTS, IT IS NOT A SUBSTITUTE FOR WHAT WE KNOW ICELAND REALLY WANTS, NAMELY SOME BEECHCRAFT AIRCRAFT UNDER THEIR OWN OPERATION. I STILL THINK DEPT OUGHT TO EXPLORE CONCESSIONAL SALES ANGLE DESPITE DEFENSE DEPT'S CLAIM "CAIN'T BE DONE."

6. FUTURE IMPUT FROM NATO. THIS MAY BE NECESSARY TO INSURE CONTINUANCE OF OLL SUPPORT. HANNIBAL VALDIMARSSON IS STILL PUZZLED AS TO WHAY NATO HAS KEPT SILENT. WE UNDERSTAND HE MAY INSIST GOI SUBMIT PROPOSALS TO NATO AND WILL NOT ACCEPT A DECLINATION TO COMMENT ON MILITARY MANPOWER NUMBERS. I EXPECT TO MEET WITH VALDIMARSSON LATER THIS WEEK AND MAY BE ABLE TO LEARN MORE ON THIS SCORE. VALDIMARSSON HAS MADE PUBLIC STATEMENTS TO EFFECT THAT PRESENT IDF HAS TOO MANY MILITARY AND MUST BE REDUCED. HE HAS TOLD ME ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS REDUCTIONS MUST BE CONSIDERABLE.

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7. WE SHOULD CONTINUE TO STEER CLEAR OF TAKING THE INITIATIVE ON POINTING OU THE ECONOMIC LOSS TO ICELAND IF IDF DEPARTS. ICELANDERS ARE DOING THIS FOR US. SO FAR AT THEIR REQUEST, WE HAVE SUPPLIED FIGURES TO THE FONMIN (THROUGH MY JAN 10 LETTER TO GIZURARSON, A COPY OF WHICH IS IN EUR/NE), VALDIMARSSON, BJORN JONSSON, GEIR HALLGRIMSSON, SEVERAL CIVIL SERVANTS IN MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, A TRADE MONTHLY, AND TO A HIGH SCHOOL DEBATING GROUP.

8. DO NOT EXPECT A DETAILED REACTION TO USG'S PROPOSALS SET FORTH IN NOVEMBER. GOI REACTION WILL PROBABLY BE STATED SUCCINCTLY: "USG PROPOSALS DO NOT GO FAR ENOUGH."

9. STABILITY OF THE GOVT. ALL OBJECTIVE ENALYSTS CLAIM THE LOM SHOULD HAVE FALLEN LONG AGO OVER ECONOMIC ISSUES. IT MAY YET HAPPEN. SO FAR 100 UNIONS HAVE REQUESTED THE RIGHT TO STRIKE IF THEIR WAGE DEMANDS ARE NOT MET BY MID-FEBRUARY. MANAGEMENT AND LABOR ARE STILL FAR APART. LABOR WANTS A 35 PERCENTRAISE. MANAGEMENT HAS OFFERED 13 PERCENT. IN THE MEANTIME COSTS CONTINUE TO RISE AND THE 1974 INFLATION FIGURE MAY WELL EXCEED THE 30 PERCENT OF 1973. SHOULD THE GOVT FALL, THE IDF WILL WITH CERTAINTY BE AN ELECTION ISSUE. IF THE PRESENT LEFTIST GOVT RETURNS TO POWER IT WILL BE CONSIDERED A MANDATE TO

RENOUNCE THE DEFENSE AGREEMENT. UNLESS THE COMMUNISTS GAIN, IT
IS UNLIKELY THAT ANY OF THE OTHER PARTIES WILL INVITE THEM IN
THE GOVT. AGAIN.
IRVING

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